

## NEARLY \$50,000 FOR DRAINAGE TAX

### Assessment of DeSoto County Tax Will Probably Be Subject of a Bitter Legal Fight.

Under the act passed at the last session of the legislature, providing for taxation on account of the drainage of the Everglades, the tax to be paid on this account in DeSoto county for the ensuing year is \$49,315.50. Whether this tax will ever be collected is an indefinite question. There is no doubt the levy will be bitterly fought, as it is the general disposition of the owners of the land included in the drainage plan to resent this burden of taxation. An interesting legal battle will be the result, in which the Consolidated Naval Stores Trust will lead the van. The first phase of the legal fight will be under the banner of unconstitutionality of the legislative act, in declaring an assessment of five cents an acre on the lands in the territory to be drained.

Not only will the right of the legislature to fix such a high special tax be disputed, but also the claim of discrimination will be urged, inasmuch as the assessment shall be made irrespective of land value.

Avon Park township is in the drainage district, and here the assessment has been made on each lot, without regard to acreage.

The taxation of DeSoto county for the ensuing year will be more than \$86,000, which added to that imposed for drainage will make the total nearly \$137,000.

The total real estate value is placed at \$2,482,140. Value of railroad and telegraph property at \$448,981 and personal property at \$796,110, making a total of \$3,687,231, upon which is a general tax levy of 26 mills.

## Work of the County Board

The honorable Board of County Commissioners met in their office in the court house at Arcadia, Fla., October 2d, 1905, at 11 o'clock a. m.

Present: Wm. King, chairman; E. F. Bostick, N. C. Larsen and D. W. Brown.

Minutes of last meeting read and approved.

Tax Assessor F. M. Cooper delivered to the Board the tax books for 1905. The members present signed same according to law.

The county officials filed their reports.

The tax collector and county judge reported licenses as follows:

State	\$28 00
County	15 25
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$43 25</b>

Firearm bond of Will Carlton, with L. N. Townsend and W. E. Mitchell as sureties, approved and permit issued.

Notary bond of T. A. Stephens, with Jas. E. Hagan and N. L. Langford as sureties, received and approved by the Board.

Petitions received from citizens of Lee and DeSoto counties asking for a bridge across the Caloosahatchee river at Labelle City. Same postponed until the next meeting of the Board, as Mr. Concanon, the commissioner for that district is absent.

A petition was received from the citizens of Fort Winder asking for a public road to run as follows: Leave the Arcadia and Charlotte Harbor road south of Mrs. Johnson's, about one-half mile and run in a southeasterly direction and cross Horse Creek near its intersection with Peace river. The petition filed and the following blazers appointed: E. W. Pooser, W. D. Platt and W. D. Waterson. Appointment mailed to E. W. Pooser, Fort Ogden, Fla.

A road petition was received from the citizens of Owens asking for the following change in the public road leading from Arcadia to Charlotte Harbor: Leaving the old road at half-mile line of Sec. 17, running south to section line, said line being the dividing line between J. D. Brewer, Futch, J. L. Perry and S. D. Smoke, following the section line one-half mile, then returning to the old road on a line between E. B. Johnson's and T. J. Howard's places. Said petition filed and the following blazers appointed:

H. C. Wilson, H. D. Brewer and J. L. Peray. Appointment mailed to H. C. Wilson, Owens, Fla.

E. E. Waldron is recommended to the Governor for the appointment of Fish and Game Warden for DeSoto county, and has filed the following contract:

Know all men by these presents, That we, the County Commissioners of the county of DeSoto and State of Florida, party of the first part, and E. E. Waldron, of the county of DeSoto and State of Florida, party of the second part, do hereby enter into this agreement:

The party of the first part feeling

the need of a Fish and Game Warden in the said county, does hereby recommend that E. E. Waldron be appointed under the law as such officer, and that if appointed the said county shall allow and pay unto the said Game Warden all sums collected from non-residents for permits to hunt or fish in the said county of DeSoto, and all fines collected from parties convicted for violating any of the game laws in the said county, and in case the said party convicted as aforesaid and fails to pay his fine, then the county shall pay to the said game officer 40 cents for every day the said convict works on the county roads; but nothing in this clause shall be so construed as to prevent the informer from obtaining one-half of the fine so imposed as is provided by law.

And the said party of the second part agrees to accept the said office and fill the same to the best of his ability; to appoint the most competent deputies, and endeavor to prevent the violation of the game law in the said county of DeSoto.

In witness whereof the said parties have hereunto set their hands and seals, this 4th day of October, A. D. 1905.

Witnesses: COUNTY COM'RS, [Seal] C. L. Carlton, Party of First Part. W. E. Leitner, By WILLIAM KEY, Ch'n. E. E. WALDRON, Party of Second Part.

The Tax Collector made his final report of taxes for 1904, which was approved by the Board.

State of Florida to W. C. Langford, Tax Collector of DeSoto:

You are hereby commanded to collect of the real estate and personal property, and from each of the persons and corporations named in the annexed roll, the taxes set down in each roll opposite each name, corporation or parcel of land therein described, and in case the taxes so imposed are not paid at the time prescribed by law, you are to collect the same by levy and sale of the goods and chattels, lands and tenements so assessed or of the person or corporation so taxed; and sums collected for State taxes you are to pay to the State treasurer as such time as may be required by law, and at the same time you are to pay to the county treasurer all sums collected for county taxes, district school taxes and other special taxes, and you are further required to make all collections on or before the first Monday in April, and on or before the first Monday in July you will make a final report to and settlement with the comptroller and county commissioners.

Given under my hand and seal this 2d day of October, 1895.

[Seal] F. M. COOPER, Assessor of DeSoto County.

The committee appointed to examine the county officials report the same in good condition.

Board adjourned to meet first Monday in November.

## THE ORANGE CROP IN DESOTO CO.

### Many Cars Being Shipped, But Work Is Not Yet Brisk--Summary of Conditions in DeSoto.

Although the shipment of oranges has been in progress several weeks the work is not active yet, nor will it become brisk until about the end of the month when the fruit will be well colored and sweet as befits the character of the Florida orange.

The packing house of Heard & Reynolds opened Wednesday morning. Probably this firm will ship four or five cars this week.

A carload a day will be the average this week of A. B. Williford, while the DeSoto Fruit Co. will ship five or six cars.

S. J. Carlton has quite a large force at work, shipping seventeen cars last week, while this week he will get out about twelve cars.

The orange men are delighted with the cool nights and the prospect they bring of quickly aiding the fruit to ripen, and if the present fine weather continues the crop will be in first class condition by November 1.

The following is the condition of the crop in DeSoto county as reported in the New York Packer:

Wauchula—Good crop of oranges, grapefruit short, former crop about normal. Quality good and will mature earlier. Buyers offer \$1 a box on the trees, but many of the growers are holding for \$1.25. No sales delivered at station reported. Crop in the state 25 per cent short of last year.—J. J. Turner. Oranges about 75 per cent, grapefruit about 66 2/3 per cent of normal. Quality very fine and about two weeks earlier. Buyers paying \$1.25 for oranges and \$2.25 for grapefruit on the trees. Average estimate for the state, 1,000,000 boxes.—L. M. Johnson. Quality good and about 75 per cent of 1904 crop. Buyers paying from \$1 to \$1.25 on trees. Estimate for the State from 1,000,000 to 1,250,000.—L. W. Whitehurst. Orange crop is from 10 to 15 per cent short of last year. Carrying quality good but runs largely to russets. Will mature 20 days earlier than usual. Buyers paying about \$4.10 on the trees if not too far from railroad station. Estimates for State vary 40 per cent of last year's crop to 100 per cent.—T. G. Wilkinson. Orange crop about an average one, if anything less than 1904. Quality good and on time.

Buyers paying \$1 to \$1.25 on the trees and about \$1.60 at the station.—A. Y. Teachy. Very nearly an average crop. Quality good and on time. Buyers paying \$1 to \$1.25 on the trees and \$1.50 to \$1.60 at the station.—R. Y. Walden.

Arcadia.—Local crop almost equal to last year. Quality fine and will be ready for shipment a little earlier than usual. Buyers paying \$1 to \$1.15 for oranges, and \$1.50 to \$2.50 for grapefruit on the trees according to quality and distance from shipping point. Estimate for the State, oranges, 80 per cent of last year; grapefruit 40 to 50 per cent.—Heard & Reynolds. From 175,000 to 200,000 boxes will be shipped from Arcadia. Oranges about the same as last season, grapefruit a little off in percentage. Quality exceptionally good, nearly the entire crop bright. Probably be matured and fairly colored by October 15, two weeks early. Buyers paying \$1 and up on the trees according to location and quality. Estimates range from 1,250,000 to 2,000,000. Think average of these extremes a conservative estimate.—Scott Bros. Crop about the same as last year in quantity and better in quality. Will mature earlier. Buyers paying \$1 to \$1.15 for oranges and \$1.50 to \$2.50 for grapefruit on the trees. Orange crop of the State estimated at from 75 to 80 per cent of last year; grapefruit at 40 to 60 per cent.—C. H. Smith. Indications point to from 75 to 80 per cent of 1904 crop. Quality good, mostly bright, and maturity early. Buyers paying \$1.15 to \$1.25 for oranges and \$1.75 to \$2.50 for grapefruit on the trees. I have been over the State and estimate the entire crop at 1,700,000 boxes.—W. O. Ralls, orange broker and packer.

Nocatee—Outlook for 75 per cent of 1904 crop. Quality better and will mature quite early. Buyers paying \$1.25 on the trees and 1.50 at the station. Estimate for the state 75 per cent of last year.

Fort Ogden.—Outlook here better than last year. Shipments from section will be 40,000 boxes of oranges 10,000 boxes of grapefruit. Quality good and will mature on time. Buyers paying \$1 on the trees and \$1.50 at stations.—W. S. Smith.

### SAID HE WANTED TO DIE.

Prisoner Slashes Wrist With Razor—Slams Door on Sheriff's Finger.

In attempting to restrain a prisoner from cutting himself with a razor, Sheriff Freeman received a painful injury to a finger last Monday night.

A man named Collins was arrested at Wauchula charged with carrying a pistol, and when brought to jail here, though searched, had cleverly managed to conceal a razor.

He declared that he would kill himself if locked up, and soon after being placed in a cell began cutting himself on the wrist.

The sheriff opened the cell door and as he started to enter, the prisoner slammed the door shut, catching one of Mr. Freeman's fingers, which though badly bruised, fortunately was not broken.

Pushing open the door again the sheriff made the fellow deliver the razor in a hurry, he having apparently lost all appetite for suicide.

His cuts, though causing loss of blood, were not severe, and were speedily dressed.

### Increase at Stetson.

The John B. Stetson University opened this fall with a decided increase in all departments:

- The College of Liberal Arts, an increase of 20%.
- The College of Law, an increase of 58%.
- The College of Technology, an increase of 21%.
- The Business College, an increase of 7%.
- The Academy, an increase of 11%.
- The Normal School, an increase of 9%.
- The Model School, an increase of 9%.
- The Music School, an increase of 58%.

### Confederate Day at Fair.

Friday, November 24, has been decided upon as Confederate Veteran's Day at the coming State Fair at Tampa, and one of the most elaborate programs of the entire fifteen days will be arranged in honor of the occasion. The Third Brigade, Florida Confederate Veterans, will hold their annual reunion on this day, and a cordial invitation is extended by that noted brigade to every Confederate veteran, wife, son or daughter in the South to attend.

### Found After Six Years.

Ft. Myers Press: Six years ago Jas. E. Hendry lost a silver watch and solid gold chain, near a pond, a short distance back from where Campbell's saw mill is now located. Mr. Hendry was separating some cattle at the time, and a search by himself and the men with him failed to discover the lost watch. The other day Ezekiel Campbell found the watch and chain on the edge of the pond, where it was dropped six years ago, gallberry bushes having grown up through the loops in the chain. The strange part of the story is that in winding up the watch, which must have been in the water for months every year, it started running regularly. Mr. Hendry has given young Campbell a nice reward for his find.

### Earnest Falls in Punta Gorda.

Punta Gorda Herald.—At a meeting of the creditors of the Earnest Dry Goods Co., held in Arcadia Wednesday, M. V. Williams was chosen trustee, and he will at once proceed to a speedy adjustment of the affairs of the concern. It is to be hoped that the business will fall into the hands of some one with ample capital to maintain it as a permanency. The financial difficulties which have befallen Ed. M. Earnest, manager of the business, are generally and sincerely regretted.

### Card of Thanks.

We, the undersigned take this means of thanking the friends for their kindness and their expressions of sympathy in the recent sickness and death of our brother.

Sincerely,

Jos. R. Gibson and sisters.

### Names of Mount Ararat.

The Turks know Great Ararat, the resting place of the Biblical ark, as Agri-Dagh, or "Mountain of the Ark." The Persians call it Koh-i-nuh, "Noah's mountain." The Amphykirs call it the "Peak of God's Boatman" and whenever in sight of it perform a peculiar religious ceremony called "Tella Rhi-neri," or the "Brave Rhinoceros," because of a legend current among them that God cursed the beast and commanded Noah not to take him on the great craft with the other animals. To this treatment the rhinoceros objected, and when the ark began to float he hooked his horn over a railing at the water's edge and floated about with the Noachian vessel, an unwearying parasite, during the forty days.

### LIVELY NOCATEE

Interesting Budget of News Comes of Its Doings.

Nocatee, Oct. 15.—Three of our young men here took a little too much King Alcohol Sunday and were promptly invited to go to the county capital and stand trial. They were fined about \$20, and they say they will not regret the expenditure if the county will repair the county road at and near the Joshua creek bridge. It certainly does need it.

Capt. C. G. Davis of Punta Gorda was in Nocatee Wednesday.

The only "kick" we have had on our community lately comes from Dr. Dawson; he says there is not enough sickness here.

Mr. Ed. McLeon of Palmetto, manager for C. G. Justice & Co., commission merchants has leased the packing house owned by W. G. Welles and has gone to work putting up fruit for his company.

Mr. E. A. Thomas and family of Arcadia moved to Nocatee last week. There is always room in our town for good citizens and we are glad to welcome them.

Mr. Chas. Bardin and family, of St. Louis, Mo., are visiting Mr. and Mrs. Alpha Branning here. They are very favorably impressed with this part of Florida and Mr. Bardin says that he expects to locate some where in this section.

Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Welles returned Saturday night from a pleasant visit to relatives and friends at Hartford, Ct. They were accompanied by their daughter, Miss Willie, who has been spending the summer there and other points in the New England States.

### BROWNVILLE TOPICS

Death of Capt. Taylor—A Good School—Personal Notes.

Brownville, Oct. 10.—Rev. Mr. Walden of Wauchula filled his regular appointment here Saturday, but owing to the illness of Rev. Mr. Giles, services were held Sunday and Sunday night by Rev. Jennings, both services were well attended.

J. S. Hollingsworth is having his house repaired which adds much to the beauty of his house.

Dosh Swindall has just completed a nice residence on his place north of Brownville.

Miss Flossie and Olivette Bogges and Prof. Chester Parker of Gardner, attended church here Sunday.

Supt. Jos. H. Brown was a pleasant visitor to the Brownville school, Friday.

Miss Blanche Williams, one of Brownville's bright young ladies, left Sunday for Ft. Myers where she has accepted a position as stenographer for lawyer, W. D. Bell.

Cyril Baldwin was casting his winning smiles at "friends" near Pine Level Sunday.

Miss Lessie Hollingsworth returned Saturday from Connecticut where she has been spending the past two months.

Eugene Williams is spending a few days with his home folks.

Miss Ada Waldron left Monday night for Cleveland where she has accepted a position as teacher of that school.

The community was shocked Saturday morning to hear of the sad death of Capt. Taylor which occurred at the home of H. A. Ellis. The remains were interred in the Gardner cemetery and the funeral services conducted by Rev. R. Y. Walden of Wauchula.

### GARDNER GOSSIP.

Interesting Batch of News Notes and Personal of Busy Place.

Gardner, Oct. 11.—We are having beautiful moonlight nights now.

The infant daughter of Mrs. Josie Coker passed away to the beautiful city beyond, Sunday evening.

Capt. Taylor was laid away in the Gardner cemetery, Saturday evening.

Neil Eurance, express agent at Gardner, went to Palatka the first of the week, but will return to his office Friday night. Mr. Booth of New York is taking his place during his absence.

Messrs. Wes. Stevens and Bryant Hampton are in Tampa on business this week.

Mr. Brant McCordquodale was visiting at Brownville Sunday, instead of Gardner. Look out!

Miss Michael gave a delightful singing at her home Sunday night.

There will be the usual services here Saturday and Sunday.

Mr. John Barnhill was in Gardner Thursday driving a double-seated hack. Girls, take a ride.

Mr. H. P. Johnson made a pop call at Arcadia Thursday.

Miss Jennie Carlton, after a severe attack of dengue fever, took charge of her school here Monday.

Miss Birdie Almand was visiting the Misses Swindle Saturday and Sunday.

Mr. McNeil was stopping at the Gardner House last week.

Miss Michael Coker has returned to school after an absence of several months.

Mr. Drew Almand went to Lakeland Monday night to work in the A. C. L. shops.

Misses Flossie and Olivette Bogges attended church at Brownville Sunday.

Miss Bertie Coker went away Monday to take her school at the upper still.

A surprise party was given at the home of Mr. Lee Almand Saturday night.

Miss Pelina Whidden was visiting in Arcadia Thursday.

### M'CALL DISAPPEARS

Ex-Clerk of Hamilton County. Who was "Short," Cannot Be Found.

Israel McCall, of Jasper, formerly clerk of Hamilton county, whose books showed a shortage of more than \$2,600, has disappeared, being last seen in Jacksonville about two weeks ago.

His relatives urge foul play as a reason for his absence, and offer a reward of \$400 for his body.

It is noticeable, however that his disappearance was not discovered until about three days before the meeting of the county commissioners before whom he was to appear and explain the "shortage."

### Expect to Hang Lamb.

Bradentown Herald: Unless Ed Lamb, who was convicted of the murder of C. D. Kennedy, is respited before the date of execution, Friday, October 27th, he will pay the penalty of his crime by suffering death on the scaffold. If Lamb is executed on the appointed day, it will be the first legal hanging in the history of the county. We hope the lesson of this hanging will deeply impress all with the enormity of the crime of one human being taking the life of another, unless in actual self-defense. Through passion, enmity or revenge, there is no excuse to take life, and those who may give away to this spirit, must pay the penalty.

## TEARS OFF CROOM'S SMUG MASK

### Statement Showing How the Financial "Economist" Is Taking Credit for Work of Reynolds.

True Democrat: A Florida newspaper recently alleged that Comptroller Croom had "saved the tax-payers about \$40,000 a year" by eliminating from the tax books, land which had been sold to the State. This ignorance of the financial history of Florida is inexcusable. Here are the facts, from the official record:

The late and much lamented Wm. H. Reynolds was re-elected comptroller at the general election of 1903; he began his new term January 8, 1901; he died July 19, 1901, after serving more than six months of his new term.

In his official report for the year 1901, Comptroller Croom refers to the increased valuation of taxable property in the State "in the face of the fact that all the property that was assessed on the rolls of 1900, upon which the State held tax certificates, has been eliminated from the tax books of 1901," and in the report he declares that "the elimination of all lands from the tax books upon which the State held claims by reason of these certificates, will save a large sum in tax sales and advertisements." During the years from 1895 to 1900, the cost of tax sale advertising ranged from \$10,000 to \$20,454. During the years from 1901 to 1904, this item ranged from \$2,941 to \$9,906. The average annual cost for the first period named was \$15,060; the average annual cost for the last period named was \$5,173; the difference, representing

the annual saving, was \$9,887—not "\$40,000 a year," as stated by the un-informed newspaper above quoted.

This saving, of nearly \$10,000 a year was effected by Comptroller Reynolds, and the fact was indirectly certified by Comptroller Croom in his official report for the year 1902, where he says: "In the preparation of the assessment rolls for the years 1901 and 1902 the assessors were instructed to eliminate therefrom all of the State lands, including all lands sold to the State for unpaid taxes, that had not been redeemed or purchased prior to January first of each year."

Of course, Comptroller Croom, who succeeded Mr. Reynolds in office late in the year 1901, could have nothing whatever to do with the preparation of the assessment rolls for that year, or the instruction of assessors in connection therewith; and it is highly probable that the instructions to assessors issued by Mr. Reynolds covered both years, or were issued by him, for the preparation of the assessment rolls of 1902, before his death.

It will be observed that nowhere does Comptroller Croom give his distinguished predecessor any credit for the change of financial policy of which he appears to be so proud, and the inference is reasonable that, by omitting such credit, he was willing that the public should attribute the credit to himself.